UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
1st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 17 September 1991
at 5.15 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Temporary Chairman: Mr. SHIHABI (President of the General Assembly)

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ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

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91-56146 3835S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/46/SR.1
19 September 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 5.15 p.m.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

1. Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda) nominated Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand) for the office of the Chairman.

2. In the absence of further nominations and in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure, the TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN said that he would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand) Chairman.

3. Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
2nd meeting
held on
Monday, 7 October 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

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ELECTION OF OFFICERS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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91-56340 3916S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/46/SR.2
15 October 1991
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for his election, which he considered a tribute to Thailand. He invited the Committee to elect its two Vice-Chairmen and its Rapporteur, in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

2. Mr. POSSO SERRANO (Ecuador) nominated Mr. Schäfer (Germany) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

3. Miss DAPUL (Philippines) nominated Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

4. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in the absence of other nominations, the Committee should not proceed to a secret vote.

5. Mr. Schäfer (Germany) and Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

6. Mr. WIDE (Sweden) nominated Mr. Fawzy (Egypt) for the office of Rapporteur.

7. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in the absence of other nominations, the Committee should not proceed to a secret vote.

8. Mr. Fawzy (Egypt) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/SPC/46/1 and A/SPC/46/L.1)

9. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the recommendations concerning the organization and rationalization of work contained in the report of the General Committee to the General Assembly (A/46/250). On the recommendation of the General Committee, the Assembly had decided that the forty-sixth session should recess on 17 December 1991 and close on 14 September 1992.

10. As a cost-saving measure, the Assembly had decided that all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees should start promptly at 10 a.m. In that connection, he wished to recall the decision adopted by the General Assembly to waive, during the current session, the application of rule 108 of the rules of procedure regarding the quorum. It was understood that such a waiver did not in any way imply a permanent change in the relevant provisions of the rules of procedure of the Assembly and that, in accordance with those rules, the presence of a majority of members was required for any decision to be taken. The extension of meetings beyond the normal time of adjournment placed a heavy burden on the interpreters. Any extension of more than 30 minutes should be requested 24 hours before the meeting. If additional meetings were required, they would probably have to be held on Saturdays.

(The Chairman)

11. In accordance with the recommendation in annex V of the rules of procedure, he intended to close the list of speakers on each agenda item when one third of the meetings allocated to that item had been held. Committee members who wished to make statements must place their names on the list kept by the Secretariat and would be called on to speak in that order. Once the list had been closed, any changes in the order could be made only by mutual consent between two delegations which had agreed to exchange places on the list. Otherwise, any representative not ready to speak when his turn came would be placed at the end of the list. In accordance with the Committee's practice and the recommendation approved by the General Assembly, representatives wishing to exercise the right of reply should so inform the Secretariat, which would keep a list of replies to be heard by the Committee once all delegations on the list of speakers for a particular meeting had been heard. If the same item was discussed at two meetings on the same day, delegations would exercise their right of reply at the end of the second meeting. The General Assembly had decided to limit to two the number of statements by any delegation in exercise of the right of reply, the first to be limited to 10 minutes and the second to five minutes. Explanations of vote should be limited to 10 minutes, in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly. When the same draft resolution was considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, delegations should, as far as possible, explain their vote only once, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless their vote in plenary meeting was different from their vote in the Committee.

12. In order to facilitate the work of the interpreters and précis-writers, speakers should provide the conference officer with 15 copies of their prepared statements and 300 copies if they were also to be distributed to delegations, specialized agencies, observers and other parties concerned.

13. The General Assembly had drawn attention to regulation 4.9 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, which stipulated: "No Council, Commission or other competent body shall take a decision involving either a change in the programme budget approved by the General Assembly or the possible requirement of expenditure unless it has received and taken account of a report from the Secretary-General on the programme budget implications of the proposal." In that connection, the Assembly had noted that it was imperative that Main Committees should allow sufficient time for the preparation of the estimate of expenditures by the Secretariat and for its consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee. The General Assembly had imposed a deadline of 20 November for submission to the Fifth Committee of all draft resolutions having financial implications and had decided that a minimum period of 48 hours should elapse before the submission of and the voting on any proposal involving expenditure, in order to allow the Secretary-General to prepare and present the related statement of administrative and financial implications. Delegations were urged to bear those decisions in mind.

(The Chairman)

14. With respect to the very expensive item of documentation, and in the light of the decisions of the General Assembly, he appealed to delegations to limit as much as possible their requests for additional documents and duplicate copies of material already distributed. In submitting draft resolutions, delegations should bear in mind that, owing to financial constraints, overnight processing of documents was not always possible.

15. As in the past, the Special Political Committee would have summary records. Moreover, the General Assembly had once again approved the recommendation of the General Committee that the Special Political Committee should be authorized to receive, on specific request, transcripts of the debates of some of its meetings or portions thereof. Those transcripts, which were not part of the official records of the Committee, would not entail any extrabudgetary expenses, as they would be prepared when the required services became available. Accordingly, they would be issued at a later stage than the summary records. The simultaneous distribution of summary records in all the official languages had often delayed their distribution. Because of financial constraints, such delays were stil liable to occur. Accordingly, he proposed that summary records should be distributed in the language in which they had originally been prepared - namely English, French or Spanish - as soon as they were available. It was understood that the other languages would follow as soon as they had been translated.

16. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposal designed to expedite its work.

17. It was so decided.

18. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations to submit the names of their representatives so that a list of members of the Committee could be issued and to bear in mind the decision taken by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session to prohibit smoking in small conference rooms (rooms 5 to 10 and A to E) and to discourage smoking in large conference rooms (rooms 1 to 4).

19. Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda), speaking as former Chairman of the Committee, congratulated Mr. Pibulsonggram on his election as Chairman and offered to work with him in the future.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/SPC/46/1 and L.1)

20. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/SPC/46/1, containing a letter from the President of the General Assembly concerning the allocation of agenda items to the Committee and other decisions by the Assembly regarding the Committee's programme of work.

21. He also drew attention to document A/SPC/46/L.1, containing a tentative timetable for the work of the Committee, and said that the schedule would have to be interpreted with the necessary degree of flexibility in order to

(The Chairman)

coordinate the Committee's work with that of the plenary Assembly and other bodies. The Committee would, in particular, continue the close coordination with the Fourth Committee that, during the previous three sessions, had enabled it to avoid as far as possible the holding of concurrent meetings. Such coordination would be done with the necessary flexibility to allow both Committees to complete their work on schedule.

22. In drawing up the Committee's programme of work, account had been taken of the available documents and the time at which other basic reports were expected to be issued. For the consideration of agenda item 70 (Effects of atomic radiation), the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effect of Atomic Radiation had been issued as document A/46/218. There was no basic document for agenda item 76 (Question of the composition of the relevant organs of the United Nations). Under agenda item 69 (Protection and security of small States), the report of the Secretary-General had been issued as document A/46/339. Under agenda item 75 (Questions relating to information), the report of the Committee on Information had been issued as document A/46/21. Before the Committee began its consideration of that item, the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/76 A would be issued as document A/46/449. Under agenda item 74 (Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects), the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had been issued as document A/46/254. The reports of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/75 had also been issued: the report on Secretariat units dealing with peace-keeping operations (A/46/169 and Add.1) and the report on the model agreement between the United Nations and member States contributing personnel and equipment to United Nations peace-keeping operations (A/46/185/Corr.1 (Spanish only) and Corr.2-3 (Russian only)).

23. Under agenda item 71 (International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space), the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been issued as document A/46/20. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would be issued as document A/46/389. With regard to agenda item 72 (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), the report of the Commissioner-General would be issued as document A/46/13 and Add.1. The report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine had been issued as document A/46/373. The report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/73 H had been issued as document A/46/399. The remaining documents relating to that item would be published before the Committee began its consideration, namely: the reports of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 45/73 D, E, F, G, I, J and K, and the report of the Working Group on the financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. With regard to agenda item 73 (Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories), the Special Committee's first and

(The Chairman)

second periodic reports pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/74 A had been issued as documents A/46/65 and A/46/282, respectively. The Special Committee's third periodic report pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/74 A would be issued in due course. The reports of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 45/74 B, C, D, E, F and G had been issued as documents A/46/440 to 445. The report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/74 A was expected to be issued before the Committee began its consideration of the item in question.

Adoption of the proposed timetable

24. The CHAIRMAN said that the timetable proposed in document A/SPC/46/L.1 took account, inter alia, of the availability of the documentation, the consideration of related items in other bodies, and the number of meetings devoted to those questions at previous sessions. He would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee wished to adopt the timetable proposed in document A/SPC/46/L.1.

25. It was so decided.

Hearings on apartheid

26. The CHAIRMAN, referring to agenda item 37 (Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa), observed that the General Assembly had decided to consider it directly in plenary meeting and that organizations and individuals having a special interest in the question would be permitted to be heard by the Special Political Committee. The Committee would devote two meetings to such hearings on 14 November, and he suggested that organizations or individuals wishing to be heard by the Committee should submit their requests in writing to the Chairman no later than Thursday, 31 October. Communications containing requests for hearings would be circulated as Committee documents and considered by the Committee at a subsequent meeting prior to the hearings. Organizations and individuals approved by the Committee would be informed by the Secretariat of the date of the meeting. He would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee agreed to that procedure.

27. It was so decided.

Working Group on questions relating to information

28. The CHAIRMAN suggested, with a view to expediting the Committee's work, that the Committee should, as in previous years, establish an open-ended working group, presided over by one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, to prepare the draft resolution on agenda item 75 (Questions relating to information). He would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee agreed to do so.

29. It was so decided.

Working Group on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

30. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, as in previous sessions, the Committee should establish an open-ended working group, presided over by the representative of Austria, to prepare the draft resolution on agenda item 71 (International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space). He would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee wished to do so.

31. It was so decided.

32. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee was scheduled to meet again on Wednesday, 9 October, at 10 a.m., when it would begin its consideration of agenda item 70 (Effects of atomic radiation). He asked all delegations wishing to speak on the item to inscribe their names on the speaker's list, which was already open and would be closed at the end of the meeting on Wednesday, 9 October.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
3rd meeting
held on
Wednesday, 9 October 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SCHÄFER (Germany)
(Vice-Chairman)

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AGENDA ITEM 70: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

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Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/46/SR.3
15 October 1991
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

/...

91-56395 3915S (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 70: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (A/46/218; A/SPC/46/L.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/46/218). It also drew attention to documents A/46/203, 223, 225, 276, 314 and 320, containing letters from Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru on behalf of the members of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, and to documents A/46/163, 344 and 501, containing letters from Ukraine, Vanuatu (on behalf of the seven countries of the South Pacific Forum, namely, Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) and China, respectively. The Committee also had before it a draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/46/L.2.

2. He suggested that the list of speakers in the debate on item 70 should close at 11.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 9 October 1991, and that the draft resolution should be put to the vote at the following meeting of the Committee. He would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Committee agreed to those suggestions.

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. DEREYMAEKER (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.2 and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus by the members of the Committee.

5. Mr. VAN SCHAIK (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that the Community attached great importance to the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and welcomed the fruitful cooperation between the Scientific Committee and specialized agencies such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Commission on Radiological Protection and the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements. The Community also expressed its satisfaction with the report recently submitted by the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session (A/46/218).

6. The report emphasized the need for further knowledge of radiation sources and of unavoidable and circumstantial exposures to radiation. The efforts in that direction by the Scientific Committee were of great value to the European Community and its member States, since they provided a useful input to Community policy in the field of radiation protection.

7. The Twelve noted with appreciation that the methodology developed by the Scientific Committee for close evaluations had provided a fundamental basis for the comparison of the results of the international review undertaken the previous year to assess the consequences in the Soviet Union of the Chernobyl

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

accident. The European Community and individual experts from member States had been actively involved in the assessment project, and it was hoped that the project report, presented in Vienna in May 1991, would provide guidelines for follow-up research and that the fruitful collaboration between the Scientific Committee and other organizations would continue.

8. Although accidents causing serious exposure had been very rare, the possibility of accidents could not be disregarded, because a nuclear industry existed and radiation sources were used for industrial, medical and agricultural purposes. The European Community and its member States were convinced of the importance of effective international cooperation in that area. It should be recalled in that respect that, at the meeting of the European Council held in Rome in December 1990, the Community and its member States had decided to provide technical assistance to the Soviet Union in the field of, inter alia, safety of nuclear installations. The Community's trade and cooperation agreement with the Soviet Union made provision for, inter alia, a 400-million ECU programme of technical assistance that designated as priority areas energy sources and the safety of nuclear installations. The Community was currently also negotiating cooperation agreements between the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) and the Soviet Union, in particular in the field of nuclear safety.

9. Furthermore, all member States of the European Community had signed the Convention on Earlier Notification of a Nuclear Accident. The European Community as such had also decided to accede to it, since the Community itself operated nuclear plants within its joint research centres, and had specific responsibilities in the field of radiological protection under the EURATOM Treaty.

10. The European Community and its member States supported the resolution to renew the mandate of the Scientific Committee.

11. Mr. SIDOROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/46/218) showed that the Committee was carrying out activities of great importance and deserved to be commended. Of particular value was the Committee's work on analysing the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. The current situation in the Chernobyl region continued to be very serious. Although years had passed, the inhabitants of the region were still suffering from health problems caused by the disaster at the nuclear power station. Efforts were currently continuing at both the central government and the republic level to offset the accident's impact as much as possible and focused on medical assistance, food distribution, pollution control and measures for the well-being of the population.

12. Since May 1986, more than 25,000 million roubles had been allocated to resolve Chernobyl's problems, but it had not yet been possible to improve the situation substantially in the areas affected, and only recently had the magnitude of the long-term impact of the accident become clear.

(Mr. Sidorov, USSR)

13. The efforts to counteract the adverse consequences of the Chernobyl tragedy clearly could not be carried out in an isolated fashion, but necessitated a pooling of both intellectual and material resources and the technical and scientific potential of many States, international organizations and scientific research centres. The Soviet Union was deeply grateful for the assistance it had received from the international community in confronting the problems that had arisen in the aftermath of the Chernobyl tragedy, and he commended in particular the efforts of the specialized agencies and the other bodies of the United Nations system. The lessons of Chernobyl had borne out the conviction that there could be no fully reliable guarantee against accidents in nuclear facilities. The problem of atomic radiation confirmed the overriding need to achieve nuclear disarmament. The initiatives recently adopted by the Presidents of the USSR and the United States showed that the process of nuclear disarmament had begun and that mankind was gradually drawing nearer to a non-nuclear world, one that was safer and more stable.

14. The information contained in the report of the Committee underscored the need to prevent radiation from polluting the environment. One important initiative in that connection might be to halt nuclear arms testing. The Soviet Union was in favour of reducing, and eventually totally eliminating, nuclear tests as soon as possible. President Gorbachev had recently announced a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests for one year and had expressed the hope that the other nuclear Powers would follow suit.

15. With the third millennium approaching, the time had come for United Nations bodies, including the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, to participate more actively in efforts to protect the environment and to use scientific and technological achievements for peaceful means and for the good of all States. It was to be hoped that the Scientific Committee would make a major contribution to that end.

16. Mr. NEJEDLY (Czechoslovakia) said that his country had participated in the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation since its creation in 1955 and had contributed to it, mainly by providing data from Czechoslovak research institutes. At first, the Scientific Committee's efforts had focused primarily on the question of radionuclide fallout from nuclear-weapon testing in the atmosphere and its biological consequences for human beings. The situation had changed in 1963 with the conclusion of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Testing in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, a positive development that to a large extent had been the result of the work of the Scientific Committee, which had warned the General Assembly of the dangerous consequences of radioactive fallout. With the Treaty in place, the Committee had been able to devote more attention to the effects of nuclear radiation from other sources, such as the nuclear fuel cycle, from the mining of uranium ore to the nuclear energy industry, natural sources and uses in medicine for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes.

(Mr. Nejedly, Czechoslovakia)

17. The Scientific Committee had recently begun to study the effects of nuclear radiation on flora and fauna and had focused on the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, in collaboration with other international organizations, such as the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency and others. It had also considered the psychological impact of the perception of radiation risks and the genetic risks of nuclear radiation.

18. Czechoslovakia would continue to support the activities of the Scientific Committee, mainly by providing scientific data. In that connection, it had given detailed answers to the Committee's questionnaire on medical applications of radiation (including nuclear medicine) and had provided information on occupational exposure to radiation and on radionuclides released into the atmosphere and water by Czechoslovak nuclear power stations. Czechoslovakia was also interested in questions regarding radon, a subject to which the Scientific Committee had given considerable attention for a number of years.

19. His Government was pleased to contribute to the efforts of the Scientific Committee because of the great importance that it had from the point of view of ecology. Other aspects of the Scientific Committee's work, such as the induction of malignant tumours through radiation or the effects of radiation on the growing human brain, were also important, although Czechoslovakia was unable to participate actively in those activities for lack of relevant data.

20. He hoped that the Scientific Committee could continue its work with the support of the Special Political Committee and the General Assembly.

21. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee would continue its discussion of agenda item 70 at the next meeting, to be held on Thursday, 10 October 1991, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
4th meeting
held on
Thursday, 10 October 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

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AGENDA ITEM 70: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued)

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91-56420 3943S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/46/SR.4
17 October 1991
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 70: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued) (A/46/218 and A/SPC/46/L.2)

1. Ms. BIRD (Australia) said that her country, one of the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/46/L.2, had been a member of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation since its establishment in 1955. Referring to the major reports of the Committee, she said that they contained authoritative and up-to-date interpretation of radiation sources and effects and a vast amount of reliable scientific detail. Given the difficulty of the material, however, her delegation renewed its suggestion that the Secretariat could prepare a simplified version of those reports for the public containing less specialized technical information. That had been done following the publication of the 1982 report, and that version was currently in use in institutions of higher education in Australia as an excellent introduction in the training of radiographers, nurses and other paramedical staff.

2. Australia had consistently maintained that the work of the Committee should not be seen in scientific isolation, but in relation to a world over-armed with nuclear weapons. The Australian Government was firmly committed to the objective of complete nuclear disarmament under effective international control. It had consistently urged States possessing nuclear arsenals to reduce them in order to achieve complete nuclear disarmament. Therefore it warmly welcomed the United States' recent offer to initiate a significant cut in nuclear arms and the Soviet Union's positive response including their decision to suspend nuclear testing for one year. Her delegation hoped that the other nuclear Powers would respond to those decisions in a similar spirit.

3. Referring to the Treaty of Rarotonga, which had established a large area of the South Pacific as a nuclear-free zone, she said that it reflected the concerns of countries in the region about the nuclear-arms race, continued nuclear testing in the region and proposals to dump nuclear waste in the South Pacific. It was disappointing that the three Protocols to the Treaty, which had been ratified by the Soviet Union and China, had still not been signed or ratified by the United States, the United Kingdom and France.

4. Its third protocol constituted an undertaking not to test any explosive device within the area covered by the nuclear-free zone. The countries in the region remained deeply concerned that French nuclear testing continued there. Australia was opposed in principle to nuclear testing and considered that France's decision to join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty constituted a further reason to stop such testing. Australia and the countries of the South Pacific had called on France many times to cease its nuclear testing programme in the South Pacific and believed that, if France insisted that such a programme was necessary, it should be conducted in metropolitan France.

5. Mr. SHIGEIE (Japan) said that nuclear energy and related technologies were becoming an increasingly important part of daily life and, consequently, the need to guard against the potentially harmful effects of such technology became all the greater. The dangers of atomic radiation affected everyone, and that threat bound all people together as a truly global community. Because the threat was global, the response must be global as well.

6. The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation played an invaluable role as a forum for scientific cooperation in gathering and disseminating accurate information. Efforts to protect mankind and the environment from the harmful effects of atomic radiation must be based on purely scientific and technical information.

7. As a member country, Japan had attached great importance to the work of the Committee and found its activities both informative and of great practical use. Japan reaffirmed its continued support and cooperation in promoting the work of the Committee. It also urged Member States, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other specialized agencies to continue their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with all relevant information. His delegation also hoped that the Special Political Committee would reaffirm its support for the work of the Scientific Committee by adopting the resolution contained in document A/SPC/46/L.2 by consensus.

8. Mr. ZVONKO (Belarus) said that Belarus, which was the new name of his country, believed that the problem of nuclear radiation was an extremely serious matter. Having suffered direct consequences from the Chernobyl disaster, it recognized the importance of the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.

9. The Chernobyl catastrophe had had consequences not only for Belarus, but for many other countries as well. Radioactivity from Chernobyl had been observed in wild birds found far from the European continent. There had also been transboundary atmospheric contamination and possible transmission of contamination by water.

10. He agreed in general with the observations in paragraph 6 of document A/46/218, listing the Committee's recommendations and conclusions. The Government of Belarus believed that the project mentioned in that paragraph was a first step in the study of the many problems caused by the Chernobyl disaster. However, given the short time period allocated to the project, it had been difficult to obtain complete information. Furthermore, the data offered by experts was insufficient to reflect the real situation. He was concerned by the excessively optimistic tone of the project and, in that respect, observed that the effects of radiation were being re-examined. There was a lack of reliable data on the possibility of contracting chronic illnesses and on the effects of low-level doses of radiation. The other harmful effects of industrial waste were not well known, either, as had been recognized by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization.

(Mr. Zvonko, Belarus)

11. In Belarusian scientific circles, it was felt that the results of the international project on Chernobyl were based on data applicable to a small population group that was not homogeneous and they did not take into account variations in isotope composition. Furthermore, the influence of prevailing harmful conditions on the future health of the population had not been considered. There was also a lack of information on the populations which had suffered the most, especially children evacuated from areas affected by the Chernobyl disaster.

12. In 1990, the delegation of Belarus had said that it was willing to cooperate actively with the Committee and would also be willing to become a member. Consultations were continuing on that matter. His country, because of the special knowledge it had gained since the Chernobyl catastrophe, could make a significant contribution to the Committee.

13. Mr. ZAWELS (Argentina) said that paragraph 3 of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation described the extensive and important agenda considered by the Committee, and the sources of natural or man-made radiation that produced effects which had direct or indirect consequences for human beings.

14. The Chernobyl accident continued to demonstrate the magnitude of the damage caused and the need to redouble efforts to prevent a repetition of that disaster. He referred to the important agreements reached by the United States and the Soviet Union with regard to nuclear weapons, and to the unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests declared by the Soviet Union.

15. Argentina attached great importance to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. As an example, he referred to his country's National Atomic Energy Commission which, among other activities, was carrying out two programmes related to that question: the first, the radioisotopes and radiation programme, was intended to develop and promote the use of radioisotopes and ionizing radiation in the various activities associated with health, industrial and agricultural production and research.

16. The second programme, on radiological protection and nuclear safety, was intended to ensure adequate protection of the public, workers in the nuclear industry, and the environment. In that connection, he drew attention to the agreement signed by Argentina and Brazil in August 1991, on the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy. Negotiations had also begun between those two countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency on a safeguard agreement permitting the Agency to inspect Argentine and Brazilian nuclear installations with a view to ensuring that the two countries' nuclear programmes were used for purely peaceful purposes.

17. Lastly, he said that his country was a sponsor of draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.2, which he hoped that the Committee would adopt.

18. Mr. MEHRA (India) said that his country attached great importance to the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of its people. The prime objective of India's atomic energy programme, as defined in the 1948 Atomic Energy Act, was the development, control and use of atomic energy solely for peaceful purposes.

19. Tragic accidents like the one at Chernobyl in 1986 could not be forgotten. He noted that India had pledged assistance amounting to $250,000 towards relief for the victims of the Chernobyl disaster. Similarly, India, which was fully aware of the need to maintain the highest nuclear safety standards, had closely cooperated with the Scientific Committee, and had participated actively in its annual meetings in Vienna and in the preparation of its annual reports.

20. In the context of the Committee's requirements for more extensive data for radiation exposure evaluations and other studies, his delegation hoped that Member States, the specialized agencies and the organizations of the United Nations system would continue to make available information pertinent to the valuable studies and research carried out by the Scientific Committee.

21. The annual report submitted by the Scientific Committee revealed its important and fruitful work in the fields of radiation exposure and the risks resulting from such exposure. He repeated that India would cooperate fully with the Committee in its efforts.

22. Mr. DONG Jianlong (China) said that the potential effects of atomic radiation on man and the environment were among the major issues of current concern. Bearing in mind that decisions to be adopted in the future on many significant issues would be based on a comprehensive and accurate knowledge of the known scientific facts in that field, the work done by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation to examine and compile information on the subject assumed paramount importance. The Scientific Committee had included in its programme of work issues of great technical complexity which had a direct impact on man and the environment, such as the environmental effects of radiation and perception of the dangers resulting from radiation exposure, and had also dealt with various aspects of the effects of low-level radiation, thereby increasing people's overall understanding of the effects of atomic radiation.

23. Lastly, China, a sponsor of the draft resolution presented by the delegation of Belgium (A/SPC/46/L.2), expressed the hope that the Scientific Committee would continue its work with the support of all the organs and agencies concerned in the United Nations system.

24. Mr. PAULSEN (Chile) said that his country could not remain indifferent to the results of the studies by the Scientific Committee, which over the years had managed to compile a valuable body of information on the question of atomic radiation, thereby contributing to a better awareness of the danger posed by atomic radiation for present and future generations.

(Mr. Paulsen, Chile)

25. Chile had joined those countries that were members of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific in conveying to the United Nations its concern at and categorical rejection of the nuclear tests carried out by France at Mururoa atoll. During 1991 Chile had had to convey letters of protest to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on six occasions. The experiments constituted a serious threat to the marine environment, natural resources and the ecosystem as a whole, as well as affecting the health of the inhabitants of the areas adjacent to the tests.

26. Nuclear tests, regardless of who carried them out, violated the basic rules of justice. In that regard, it was to be noted that the countries affected had not given their consent to the conducting of those experiments. Chile considered that the concept of national security adduced by some nuclear Powers in order to justify their nuclear-test programmes had a much broader dimension, for it was obvious that there would be no security without an environment free from atomic radiation.

27. Chile congratulated the Scientific Committee on the studies and assessments it had made concerning the tragic accident at Chernobyl in 1986, and shared the hope that the international conference to conclude the project and the report to be published would clarify the scientific issues and lead to better public understanding of the accident and its consequences.

28. Lastly, Chile called upon the international community to continue to monitor the effects of atomic radiation and urged the countries possessing nuclear technology to focus their activities on greater cooperation in the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes with a view to ensuring international peace and security and full compliance with the Charter.

29. Mr. BOUTSKO (Ukraine) drew members' attention to the declaration by the Ukrainian Supreme Parliament on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, in which it was stated that more than 2 million persons, 116 districts, towns, wooded and cultivated areas, rivers and the atmosphere had been threatened by radiation. At present it was very difficult to find anyone in Ukraine who was not marked by the pain of that national tragedy, the consequences of which had still not been explained or fully understood.

30. That situation was attributable to the fact that, according to the experts, further consequences would become apparent in 10 or 15 years' time, or even later. However, there was already a perceptible increase in cancers, particularly of the thyroid gland, and of leukaemia among children, as well as a psychological and physical deterioration among the inhabitants of the areas affected.

31. His country noted with satisfaction the activities related to the Chernobyl tragedy carried out by the United Nations specialized agencies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization

(Mr. Boutsko, Ukraine)

(UNIDO), and in particular by the group of international experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which had studied the consequences of the disaster and analysed the measures taken. Ukraine considered that the solutions proposed to alleviate the effects of radiation were positive, but it did not entirely concur with the conclusions of the study with regard to health, given the limited territorial and temporal scope of the research done. The studies done by Ukrainian scientists over the last five years had come up with far from optimistic results that differed from the conclusions of the study by the international experts. Unfortunately, no study had been carried out on the 600,000 persons who had assisted in the evacuation and the 100,000 persons who had returned to settle in the region and had been exposed to significant radiation doses.

32. Another issue of concern to Ukraine was the effect of the doses of radiation, small but significant as regards their consequences for the thyroid gland, to which 8,000 children had been exposed. In 1990, subsequent to the departure of the foreign experts, the Institute of Endocrinology of Ukraine had discovered 20 cases of thyroid cancer in children, compared with one or two cases recorded annually in the past. The diagnosis had been questioned by the experts and so the Institute had referred the cases to Washington, where the diagnosis was confirmed.

33. In view of the complexity of the situation, Ukraine considered that the studies which had been carried out represented the first stage of a wider effort of international cooperation, which would include in-depth analysis of the effects of the radiation. Ukraine was therefore prepared to collaborate with international experts in various areas and in particular in the field of health.

34. On 24 August 1991 the Supreme Parliament of Ukraine had passed a law in which it had declared independence and established a State of Ukraine. On 1 December 1991 a referendum would be held which was certain to endorse that decision, since the population was unwilling to relive the errors of the past and wished to be masters of their own land and of their own country and to ensure its well-being, tranquillity and stability.

35. Mr. POSSO (Ecuador) said that a complete understanding of the pernicious effects of nuclear radiation on human beings was certainly needed in order to be able to engage in cooperation with Governments and specialized organizations in the search for effective scientific and medical responses which would make it possible to combat the illnesses caused by exposure to nuclear radiation. More specific knowledge must also be acquired regarding all sources of radioactive contamination and their effects in different environments and in multiple exposures.

36. The delicate nature of the materials used in nuclear plants carried with it the risk of fatal accidents, and while the total elimination of such accidents might be regarded as an unrealistic objective, all appropriate precautions could be taken to guard against their harmful effects.

(Mr. Posso, Ecuador)

37. Ecuador considered that it was vital to promote international cooperation, as the effects of atomic radiation were so serious and extensive that no country, however developed, would be able to apply all the necessary safeguards and preventive measures. Likewise the close association of the nuclear sciences with modern life and the vulnerability of human beings and the environment to nuclear radiation constituted a further argument in favour of international cooperation.

38. Ecuador welcomed the links between the Scientific Committee and other bodies of the system, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), since it was clear that there was a relationship between the current needs of mankind, the need to preserve and protect the environment and the insistent demand of the peoples of the world for protection from catastrophes occurring as a result of nuclear accidents and for the provision of appropriate means of dealing with the risks to health and well-being caused by atomic radiation.

39. A crucial issue as far as Ecuador and other developing countries were concerned was the need to secure the complete cessation of irresponsible nuclear testing, which his country had sought, together with the members of the Permanent Commission of the South Pacific Conference and other nations equally threatened by such practices, in all the forums of the international community. The environmental damage caused by such tests and their secondary effects were beyond dispute; nevertheless, each year protests were made which were either ignored or, at best, simply registered by the international community without any further show of support for a persistent real and fully justified concern.

40. Ecuador was not opposed to the increasingly common practice of using nuclear power as a complementary or alternative energy source, but firmly maintained that the increasingly pressing need for safe management of sources of atomic energy to be guaranteed should be borne in mind, and reaffirmed the fundamental principle that nuclear power should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and to support the integral development of peoples.

41. Lastly, Ecuador supported the draft resolution (A/SPC/46/L.2) proposed by Belgium.

42. Mr. FAZL-I-MAHMOOD (Pakistan) said that the developments which had transformed international relations and ushered in an era of mutual cooperation provided a conducive setting in which to approach constructively the problem of atomic radiation and the threat it posed to humanity. In that respect, Pakistan welcomed the announcement by President Bush of the United States of America of the unilateral elimination of land- and sea-based tactical nuclear weapons and the decision of the Soviet Union to reciprocate with similar measures.

43. With the objective of keeping South Asia free of nuclear weapons, the Prime Minister of Pakistan had recently called for consultations between the

(Mr. Fazl-I-Mahmood, Pakistan)

United States, the Soviet Union, China, India and Pakistan to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region. A concerted effort needed to be made to prohibit all types of nuclear explosion. In that context, Pakistan welcomed the initiative of President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union by which that country would unilaterally refrain from nuclear testing for an initial period of one year. For its part, Pakistan supported the early conclusion of a comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and similar regional and bilateral agreements, since such measures would not only reduce the threat of nuclear contamination of the environment but would also strengthen efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

44. Pakistan was opposed to the application of discriminatory, inequitable and selective restrictions on the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, since neither logic nor reason supported the assumption by certain nations that nuclear technology was a panacea for a select few and not beneficial for other nations.

45. If nuclear mishaps and resultant devastation were to be averted, it was imperative that the industrialized countries and the developing countries should jointly endeavour to achieve that objective within a rational and equitable framework. The tragic accident at Chernobyl illustrated the need for greater international cooperation in that field.

46. The world faced two problems, of shrinking energy resources and serious environmental degradation caused by the use of fossil fuels. For countries such as Pakistan which were confronted with the problem of an acute shortage of conventional fuels and energy resources, the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes was indispensable, while it also had other applications in the medical and scientific fields.

47. In that context, the industrialized countries must extend assistance to developing countries in the maintenance of nuclear reactors that they had exported, and refrain from prohibiting the sale of vital spare parts. Concern over nuclear non-proliferation should not therefore serve as a pretext for depriving developing countries of safety-related information on nuclear installations on a discriminatory basis. That was an approach which ran counter to international concerns over the dangerous effects of atomic radiation and the potentially disastrous consequences of a possible accident in a nuclear installation. In that respect, his delegation noted that the International Atomic Energy Agency had taken an important lead in order to help ensure the continued flow of safety-related information, and hoped that that process would be further expanded with the objective of achieving adequate safety standards in nuclear installations world wide.

48. It was extremely important to protect nuclear installations from armed attacks, the consequences of which could obviously be disastrous. An important step in that direction had been taken in South Asia with the

(Mr. Fazl-I-Mahmood, Pakistan)

signature by India and Pakistan on 31 December 1988 of the Islamabad Agreement prohibiting attacks on each other's nuclear installations. Instruments of ratification had since been exchanged.

49. In conclusion, his delegation wished to commend the Scientific Committee for its valuable work in the field of ionizing radiation and its effects on human life and the environment, and looked forward with interest to the conclusions of the study currently being conducted by the Committee on medical and occupational exposures to radiation. It also welcomed the increased cooperation between the Committee and UNEP and other specialized bodies, and urged continued support for the Committee to enable it to fulfil its important tasks.

50. Mr. MAREHALAU (Federated States of Micronesia), speaking on behalf of the nine nations of the South Pacific Forum - Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu - said that although the South Pacific region seemed far removed from global problems, it was subject to a significant number of environmental threats, including global warming and climate change. In addition, the potential impact of atomic radiation on the region, where a nuclear testing programme had been carried out over the past three decades, was a matter of concern. Tests conducted in the period up to 1974 had resulted in a dramatic increase in the levels of artificial radiation, and in particular of Strontium 90 and Caesium 137, which had serious effects on human health. Radiation levels had declined since the termination of atmospheric testing in 1974, but the longer-term effects of such radiation would have to be continuously monitored.

51. The South Pacific Forum was also concerned about the continuation by France of an underground nuclear testing programme in the Tuamotu Archipelago to the east of the Cook Islands. In the communiqué contained in the annex to document A/46/344 the Forum had expressed its deep dismay at the French Government's statement that its nuclear testing programme in the South Pacific would not be affected by its decision to become a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Forum had reiterated its firm and unceasing opposition to nuclear testing in the region. In that regard the Forum had agreed to give consideration to an expanded programme of opposition to France's nuclear testing in the region. It had suggested that the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme should play a central role in monitoring and evaluating the environmental impact of nuclear testing in the region. The short message of the Forum communiqué was that French nuclear testing must be firmly opposed until France ceased its nuclear testing programme. While a recent analysis undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency at Mururoa had concluded that there was no evidence of significant radiation levels, given the fragile atoll environment in which the nuclear tests were carried out it was impossible to accept uncritically any assurances regarding the overall safety of the testing programme.

(Mr. Marehalau, Federated States of Micronesia)

52. The underground cavities at Mururoa contained the poisonous remains of over 100 nuclear explosions, equivalent to 100 Hiroshima bombs. Given the long life of radioactive materials, there could be no guarantee that they would stay forever sealed within the atoll without polluting the outside environment. Despite claims by France about the safety of its nuclear testing programme, neither the Atkinson Report of 1983 nor the United Nations Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons ruled out the possibility of accidental damage or longer-term release of atomic radiation.

53. In the broader context, the South Pacific countries' steadfast opposition to nuclear testing of any sort was based on other considerations as well as those of an environmental nature. It was the embodiment of their strongly held view that there was simply no place for nuclear weapons in their region. Hence the importance they attached to the early achievement of a Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, the support they gave to nuclear disarmament efforts and non-proliferation and their opposition to proposals to dump nuclear waste in their region. All those concerns were reflected in international and regional forums and in various regional arrangements.

54. Mr. STEFANINI (France), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representatives of Australia, Chile and the Federated States of Micronesia, in their statements, had questioned the nuclear testing carried out by his country in French Polynesia.

55. In order to maintain an independent defence system, France had no alternative but to maintain a deterrent capacity which, to be credible, must incorporate all the necessary technical advances. For that reason, France had to pursue its nuclear testing as and when required by technological needs. It was precisely in relation to those requirements that France had decided to reduce the number of tests from eight to six a year.

56. The nuclear testing was carried out in a part of French territory which was eminently suitable - especially geographically - for carrying out experiments, which were always underground and would not endanger the interests of the States of the region, the health of the people living there, or the environment.

57. That had been freely verified in the field by a number of international scientific missions during the past 10 years. The most recent mission for comparing radioactivity measurements had been carried out in March 1991 by three different laboratories concurrently, one of them from the International Atomic Energy Agency. The results would be published shortly under the auspices of the Agency. The measurements carried out by those missions showed that there was no difference between the quality or level of artificial radioactivity in the approaches to the Mururoa and Fangataufa sites and those existing in the South Pacific or the South Atlantic.

(Mr. Stefanini, France)

58. What was more, France's policy of transparency and dialogue was not merely a matter of receiving scientific missions; it involved an annual report by the Secretary-General on the number and date of nuclear tests, an annual report by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, an invitation to French and foreign personalities to visit the site, and, since May 1990, a report after every test on the capacity of the device used and the setting up of a permanent observatory for monitoring the environment in the South Pacific. Not many States were so open on that subject.

59. When General Assembly resolution 44/119 was adopted, France had recorded the reasons why it had not been able to comply with the obligations of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga). France's position in that respect had not changed.

60. Ms. BIRD (Australia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, as explained earlier, she did not agree with the representative of France that his country's nuclear testing had no long-term effects on the environment.

61. However, Australia's position was based not only on environmental considerations but also on its opposition to nuclear testing in any region, as was clear from its support for a comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of nuclear testing. Her Government therefore welcomed the announcement of the Governments of the United States of America and the Soviet Union and hoped that progress would be made towards the destruction of nuclear arsenals and the reduction of nuclear testing.

62. The CHAIRMAN said that a decision would have to be taken on the draft resolution in document A/SPC/46/L.2, whose sponsors had now been joined by Canada, Costa Rica, India, New Zealand, Portugal and Spain. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

63. The draft resolution in document A/SPC/46/L.2 was adopted by consensus.

64. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its discussion of agenda item 70. It would in due course submit a report on the subject to the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
5th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 15 October 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE RELEVANT ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/46/437)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that since there were no speakers on the list for agenda item 76, he would suggest that the Committee defer consideration of the item until the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

2. Mr. SHIGEIE (Japan), speaking on behalf of the Asian Group, supported the proposal to defer consideration of the item.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee agreed to recommend that the item be included in the provisional agenda of the forty-seventh session.

4. It was so agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 69: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (A/46/339; A/SPC/46/L.3)

5. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to an error in paragraph 2 of the English text of the draft resolution (A/SPC/46/L.3): the last two words should read "internal affairs" instead of "external affairs".

6. Mr. ZAKI (Maldives) recalled that the item under consideration had been included for the first time in the Assembly agenda in 1988 at the request of his country. Its initiative was motivated by the attempt of a band of mercenaries on 3 November 1988 to overthrow the legitimate and democratically elected government. Apart from causing psychological trauma, the incident had resulted in the loss of innocent lives and the destruction of public and private property, with serious consequences for the country's future. Luckily, the positive international response and timely assistance from a friendly country helped to thwart the evil designs of the mercenaries.

7. The Secretary-General, in the report he submitted in compliance with the relevant Assembly resolution (A/46/339), emphasized the interest of the international community in safeguarding the security of small States because the international order could be undermined by their instability. The vulnerability of small States was no more clearly demonstrated than in the case of the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. If an economically rich country with powerful friends could be virtually wiped off the political map, where did the security of much smaller States with fewer economic resources lay? The quick response of the Security Council and the international community to the threat was a clear manifestation of the validity of the collective security system envisaged in the Charter; no one today questioned the capability of the United Nations to offer protection and security to its Members in accordance with the provisions of the Charter if the Member States, and particularly the permanent

(Mr. Zaki, Maldives)

members of the Security Council, demonstrated the political will to implement those provisions on a consistent and universal basis.

8. Although the easing of tensions in international relations was a matter of satisfaction, there was increasing alarm about the danger from mercenaries and terrorists, with their powerful international network and financial resources far beyond the means of small States. While no country, big or small, could command absolute security, small States were much more vulnerable to attacks from those adventurers and, without international assistance and cooperation, could become their victims. Therefore ratification of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries by all States Members of the United Nations would be an important step in countering that menace. Furthermore, the recommendations of the workshop on the protection and security of small States held in Maldives in April 1991 merited consideration by the international community.

9. On behalf of all the co-sponsors, his delegation was proud to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Protection and security of small States" (A/SPC/46/L.3), elaborated after consultation with a number of delegations and taking into account the views of various countries and regional groups. He hoped that in the new international climate of confidence, the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

10. Mr. MAHMOOD (Pakistan) pointed out that the question of the security of small States was quite complex and should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Threats to the security of small States were not limited to acts of overt aggression by larger States with expansionist designs but also took the form of economic coercion, political pressure, threats or use of force and acts of subversion, including through the use of mercenaries.

11. Strict compliance with established international norms in the conduct of relations between States was fundamental in any approach to the problem, since violations of those norms posed a direct threat to international and regional peace and security. Moreover, recent trends in international relations provided an environment for States conducive to resolving their disputes peacefully in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

12. Pakistan believed that the most appropriate mechanism for guaranteeing the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States was the collective security system of the United Nations. The framework for action to counter threats to the peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression was provided in Chapter VII of the Charter, which vested the Security Council with the authority effectively to respond in such situations. Consequently, his delegation emphasized that collective action taken by the United Nations should clearly reflect the will of the international community.

13. His delegation favoured a more active role for the Secretary-General in dealing with potential threats to international peace and security.

(Mr. Mahmood, Pakistan)

Article 99 of the Charter envisaged such a role and it could effectively be played by giving preventive diplomacy a sharper edge. In that connection, the recommendation made by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization (A/46/1) concerning the need to strengthen the conflict-prevention capability of the United Nations should be given serious consideration.

14. Regional arrangements or agencies must contribute to efforts to maintain international peace. Chapter VIII of the Charter indicated how they should contribute. He emphasized, however, that regional efforts must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter so that they complemented the measures taken by the Organization.

15. Lastly, Pakistan was confident that the draft resolution submitted by Maldives would be endorsed by the General Assembly.

16. Mr. HIENSCH (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that the European Community and its twelve member States had considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/339) and taken note of the draft resolution sponsored by the Republic of Maldives (A/SPC/46/L.3). They recognized the fact that small States might feel vulnerable as far as their security was concerned. As they had said in their first statement on the subject at the forty-fourth General Assembly, the member States of the European Community adhered strictly to the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, irrespective of their size, and were firmly convinced that, having regard to the Charter, no distinction should or could be made between States so far as their security was concerned. It should be noted that the Preamble of the Charter rightly affirmed the principle of the equal rights of nations, large and small.

17. That principle of sovereign equality before international law enabled every State to appeal to the competent organs of the United Nations when it felt that its security, sovereignty or territorial integrity was under threat or had been violated. The Gulf crisis had demonstrated that the United Nations was capable of responding effectively in such cases. In that connection, the European Community and its twelve member States stressed the need for full implementation of all Security Council resolutions.

18. The European Community and its member States noted that the draft resolution did not provide any special status for small States; to have done so would have raised difficult problems of definition. They were also pleased to note that the draft resolution would not involve any additional financial charges for the United Nations.

19. While certain elements of the draft resolution might deviate from what the Twelve believed to be the essence of the resolution, namely, the universal principle of the right of all States to security and peace, irrespective of size, they recognized that certain small States might be more vulnerable to

(Mr. Hiensch, Netherlands)

external threats or foreign interference in their internal affairs. For those reasons, they would join the consensus on the draft resolution.

20. Mr. POSSO (Ecuador) said that the protection and security of small States merited a special guarantee which, it was generally believed, should be fully applied indiscriminately and unconditionally by all States in accordance with the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. While the peaceful settlement of disputes between States had developed to a certain extent, its application had not been universal, particularly as far as small States were concerned, and the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq had been a clear demonstration of the use of force in an attempt to resolve a conflict between two States. Until recently, in the context of the so-called Cold War, it had been extremely difficult to use any of the measures provided for within the system of collective security. Once the Cold War was over, the Gulf crisis had provided a clear opportunity to use force, with the approval of the United Nations, in order to liberate Kuwait. Once Kuwait had been liberated, the international community, in accordance with a universal concept of security, had decided to extend its protection to the whole region.

21. Such unprecedented actions had been taken by a group of States, representing the international community, carrying out a task which, in the opinion of the more orthodox, should have been carried out only by the organized international community. That meant that, in addition to the peaceful settlement of disputes and systems of collective defence, could now be added recourse to the powerful potential which the United Nations had begun to assert in the context of the so-called "new world order". That concept had been merely asserted but not defined. The rules which would govern the "new world order" were not known, especially those concerning the exercise of the new responsibilities and their limits and the controls which should be implemented in order to prevent the representatives of the international community from exceeding the powers granted to them or attempting to go beyond the objectives initially set. Neither was it yet clear whether measures involving the use of force would be carried out by a group of States representing the international community or whether they would be implemented directly by, and under the strict control of, the Security Council. Nor was it known whether the fundamental principle whereby it was for the State which considered itself to be threatened specifically to request the intervention of the United Nations system, would still be respected.

22. Ignorance of the exact rules of the game for the "new world order" had aroused considerable concern and expectation; although, on the one hand, it could be considered that the exercise of new responsibilities was the special guarantee of security that small States needed, yet, on the other hand, increased intervention could mean added vulnerability for those States. The strict, indiscriminate and unconditional implementation of the principles of international law by all States was therefore essential, and it was also vital that the rules of procedures and the standards which would govern the "new world order" should be defined so that all countries could apply them

(Mr. Posso, Ecuador)

unconditionally and correctly. A beginning should be made by defining the very concept of "small" and the comparative differences that would define medium and large States. It was also important to define those situations in which the responsibility of the international community should be invoked: in the case of military aggression; the threat of the use of force; economic aggression; and certain circumstances of social instability.

23. If the essential condition of a specific request from a State which considered itself to be threatened was abandoned and the request was regarded as implicit in the gravity of the circumstances requiring intervention, the action of the international community would no longer be a guarantee of security but become one more threat for small States. For that reason, his delegation considered regional and subregional collective security systems, created within the framework of universal security, to be very important, since they constituted an additional guarantee of security for small States.

24. In that context, the Government of Ecuador had sought to develop a subregional system of security which could be promptly brought to bear in an updated and revamped regional context, through commitments made within the inter-American system. At the subregional level, the efforts made by the Andean countries in that respect were worthy of mention. Ecuador was aware that large States had a legitimate interest in safeguarding and protecting their security; that interest should, however, be subject to full respect for independence, sovereignty and a justified decision to become involved in regional and subregional security systems.

25. An idea that was apparently widely held was that the United Nations should improve its peace-keeping operations in order to extend them to include a policy of prevention. Ecuador supported the flexible and effective machinery of such operations and had indeed pledged its support to two of them currently under way in Central America. With regard to a policy of prevention, however, the subjective nature of the criteria which would determine the parameters of action could transform the guarantee of security into a threat against security and open the way to illegitimate and unnecessary intervention by the international community in the internal affairs of a State which the State could in fact control itself, either individually or in the context of its regional or subregional security system.

26. Ecuador, which had several positive advantages as far as security was concerned because of its geographical position, its national system of communications, a balanced demographic distribution and integrated peace, was also aware of the vulnerable situation of its fellow States in Latin America and other small States in the world confronted by the permanent threat of criminals and terrorists. The constant threat of drug trafficking, international organized crime and terrorism should be the primary incentive for joint action by the international community and one of the principal motives for setting in motion the powers implicit in the "new world order", in particular to guarantee the independence and sovereignty of small States.

(Mr. Posso, Ecuador)

27. His delegation considered that those modern dregs of humanity should be dealt with by concerted action in which the sovereign will of the countries directly involved and the regional and subregional bodies established through international solidarity should be taken into account first, before the possibility of universal action was considered.

28. Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia) said that developing countries like Mongolia, which were small in terms of population and territory, were usually much more vulnerable to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs. That did not, however, alter their perception of common security in the modern interdependent world. The United Nations Charter served as a lasting foundation for the collective security of all States without exception. That in no way detracted from the need of small States to enter into collective arrangements, regional or subregional, to protect their security, as was clearly provided for in Chapter VIII, Article 52, of the Charter.

29. In their search for the best way to safeguard their security, small States usually turned to bilateral arrangements for protection and security; that all too often brought them under foreign domination and involved them in the hostilities of other States against their will. In looking for more secure arrangements to protect their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, it was natural that small States should see in the United Nations the only impartial guarantor of their security. For that reason his delegation saw considerable merit in the idea of activating the potential for preventive diplomacy of the Secretary-General, pursuant to Article 99 of the Charter.

30. The momentous changes occurring in the world provided a historic opportunity for the fulfilment of the primary goal of the United Nations, which was the preservation of international peace and security. The Gulf crisis and the settlement of a number of regional conflicts vividly demonstrated the ability of the Organization to activate the machinery of collective security and use it effectively in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter. The prevailing atmosphere was more conducive to strengthening those mechanisms, in particular with regard to the security of small States.

31. Since it was international law which guaranteed the equality of large and small nations, his delegation firmly believed that strict adherence to the principles and norms of international law was a prerequisite for the effective functioning of the collective security system.

32. In addressing the question of the security of small States, problems relating to their economic and social development should not be overlooked, since it was precisely in that sphere that political and social evils found a breeding ground. It was clear that not only acts of violence committed by terrorists or mercenaries might endanger the security of small States. Quite

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

peaceful actions or inaction in the field of international trade and finance could have tremendous negative repercussions on the economies of small States and pose a serious threat to their stability and security.

33. The issue of the economic security of small States deserved heightened attention, especially at a time when many countries had embarked upon radical socio-economic reforms, were facing tremendous challenges in the transitional period, and were especially susceptible to various political and social events. In that context, the capability of the United Nations to monitor the economic and social problems of small States and to assist them in times of emergency should be enhanced.

34. Mongolia was of the view that the United Nations should take the lead in efforts to enhance awareness of that issue. Such efforts might include, in particular, the organization of international seminars and forums on the subject, which would deal with the various conceptual and practical issues of protecting the security of small States. It would be desirable, in that connection, to prepare a comprehensive study of the issue. His delegation welcomed the recommendations of the workshop held in Male, Maldives, and considered that they deserved very serious consideration.

35. Mongolia wished to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that Barbados, Indonesia and Nicaragua should be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
6th meeting
held on
Thursday, 17 October 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM	(Thailand)
later:	Mr. WLOSOWICZ (Vice-Chairman)	(Poland)
later:	Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Chairman)	(Thailand)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 69: PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF SMALL STATES (continued)
(A/46/339; A/SPC/46/L.3)

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that Bahrain, Bhutan, Dominica, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritania, Morocco, Panama, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and Trinidad and Tobago had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3.

2. Ms. KEHRER (Austria) said that the vast differences among States in size and power as well as in political, economic and social systems could be mitigated only by strict adherence to international law and the principle of sovereign equality. Consequently, it was one of the basic tasks of the United Nations to promote the rule of law, with particular emphasis on the teaching, study and dissemination of international law. Yet small States could rely on the rule of law only if effective mechanisms for its implementation, by collective means if necessary, were in existence. Hence the importance of establishing and promoting machinery for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. There had to be a competent international body to deal with all cases in which two or more States could not agree on the application of a rule of international law. Austria had therefore always been in favour of mandatory third-party dispute settlement in general and the enhancement of the role of the International Court of Justice in particular.

3. The United Nations had recently shown its willingness to uphold the right of small States to sovereignty and independence by using collective enforcement measures. That demonstration of resolve by the international community would undoubtedly have a deterrent effect on any potential aggressor. Nevertheless, the consequences of the Iraqi aggression, which Kuwait would have to bear for a long time, clearly showed the need to create or strengthen mechanisms within the United Nations that would as far as possible prevent such aggression.

4. With regard to the preventive mechanisms already in existence, mention should be made of the means of fact-finding available to all the main organs of the United Nations. If States, and in particular small States, adopted a policy of requesting and admitting United Nations fact-finding missions, the international community would be provided in time with adequate information for appropriate action to prevent confrontations. The draft Declaration on Fact-Finding by the United Nations in the Field of the Maintenance of International Peace and Security, elaborated by the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, and other means such as recourse to mediation or to the good offices of the Secretary-General were available in that context.

(Ms. Kehrer, Austria)

5. Lastly, there was the idea put forward by Sir Brian Urquhart that peace-keeping operations could, apart from their "traditional" use, be used "preventively". That idea, which would appear to be of particular interest to small States, would entail the preventive deployment of United Nations personnel as a deterrent, and perhaps even as a trip-wire to set in motion previously-planned enforcement action under Chapter VII of the Charter. The possible lessons to be drawn from the Gulf crisis and the United Nations response to it should be discussed in an appropriate forum, which could be either the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations or the Special Committee on the Charter.

6. Mr. KAJAIRI (Singapore) said that before proceeding further, one must define what the term "small" meant in relation to States. One key criterion for defining a small State could be a population of under 10 million. In Singapore's view, physical size was less of a factor. Some experts further distinguished between small States and micro-States, namely, those with a population of less than 1 million. It was not necessary, however, to make so fine a distinction.

7. Several major political changes had had an impact on the security of small States. The first was the end of the cold war brought about by the ideological and economic collapse of one of the sides, which had helped to lessen global tensions, thus benefiting all States. The reductions in the immense nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union could only be welcomed, although even after the latest proposed reductions, there still remained about 47,000 nuclear warheads throughout the world, enough to destroy the globe many times over.

8. Small States in particular welcomed the cooperative efforts the super-Powers were making to resolve regional conflicts, which often had forced neighbouring small States to cope with an influx of refugees and displaced persons fleeing the strife, with the attendant economic and social consequences of having to play host to masses of refugees.

9. The second major international political event had been the Gulf war, which had been perceived, perhaps too hopefully, by small States as an indication that thenceforth the United Nations would have the political will and the material means to rescue innocent small States that had been invaded and occupied by larger neighbours. Even if that was an overly optimistic perception, it was clear that would-be aggressors could not be sure that the United Nations would not intervene on behalf of the small State. Such deterrence would be enhanced if the potential victim was able to bring its case to the United Nations and have it heard expeditiously by the Security Council. The possibility of resorting to the International Court of Justice in order to settle disputes peacefully would be an even better option for all small States.

(Mr. Kajsiri, Singapore)

10. The third major political change in the international community was the switch from military-ideological confrontation to a new arena dominated by economic competition, religious differences, ethnic strife and the resurgence of long-suppressed minorities seeking to exercise their right to self-determination. Such factors were felt most strongly in small States, which did not have the requisite psychological or physical space to dampen friction in communities living side by side and competing for the same scarce resources. A further complication was that small States found it difficult to be economically competitive at the international level and to enjoy the strong economic growth that was a cure for the internal tensions between different communities living within their borders, competing for jobs, public funds and a higher standard of living.

11. Although it was clear that the international climate had changed considerably, for some small States the threats still remained basically the same: they were vulnerable to invasion and occupation by relatively small groups of mercenaries, drug traffickers or organized criminals who, although small in number, could overwhelm citizens protected at best by a handful of police.

12. The first effort at protection must come from the small States themselves, which could, for instance, build up an effective defence and deterrence force by organizing a citizens' army, which not only was cost-effective but also helped build the nation and fostered a sense of loyalty. It would also be important to create a strong economy that would make for internal stability and cohesion and for a society more confident in its international dealings. Lastly, it would be important to have an active foreign policy, based on respect for all the principles of the United Nations Charter and of international law.

13. However, owing to their inherent limitations, small States could not do everything by themselves. Singapore agreed with the observation of the Secretary-General that security arrangements for small States should also involve establishing supporting arrangements at the regional and subregional levels. By being a party to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia and a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Singapore had come to appreciate the value of such arrangements for regional confidence, stability and security.

14. Since small States constituted a significant percentage of the Member States of the United Nations, it was only fair for the United Nations to play a leading role in promoting and protecting their interests. It was at the United Nations that small States could make it known that their security and sovereignty had been threatened or violated, could rally and muster the support of the international community and bring pressure to bear on the aggressors and violators.

(Mr. Kajairi, Singapore)

15. For that reason his delegation was encouraged by the Secretary-General's suggestion that "the United Nations might take the lead in creating a much needed protective environment for small States, primarily by building upon the arrangements that already existed under the international collective security system envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations". In that connection, Singapore had a particular interest in the question of access by small States to the United Nations Security Council and the use of Article 99 of the Charter.

16. Mr. PAL (India) said that countries in the developing world were particularly vulnerable to threats from external sources, which did not only take the form of armed aggression but could also include other forms of destabilization. Small States were particularly vulnerable to activities directed against them, and it was necessary to ensure their security and protection as an integral part of preserving international stability.

17. The report of the Secretary-General incorporated the views of a large number of countries. One common thread was that the United Nations was now the organization par excellence for bringing nations together to address urgent issues relating to the maintenance of peace and security. In so doing the United Nations could also ensure that its influence was used for the protection and security of small States faced with the threat of external aggression.

18. Recent events had shown how expeditiously the Organization could deal with crisis situations once it had made up its mind to do so. The measures envisaged in the Charter were far-reaching, and when used wisely could go a long way towards safeguarding international peace and stability. Needless to say, they must always be applied with the utmost discretion and care, in compliance with the principles of universality and non-discrimination enshrined in the Charter.

19. Further, the regional arrangements set up to promote economic and technical cooperation and friendly exchanges between countries that were in geographical proximity to one another offered the prospect of ensuring that tension did not arise in a particular region. The task of the United Nations and its specialized agencies was to strengthen such regional organizations and encourage widespread exchanges between the countries of each region so as to ensure the common and accelerated development of the region in question.

20. At the same time, it must be recognized that small States were vulnerable to aggression, on a lesser scale, by bands of mercenaries and drug traffickers. India condemned such acts and stood prepared to offer all necessary assistance in dealing with threats of that kind. In that regard there was a need to share intelligence and to build up the national capacities of small States to withstand those dangers.

(Mr. Pal, India)

21. Lastly, India shared the view of many other countries that close adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and peaceful settlement of disputes, was the bedrock on which the hopes of building a world of peace and stability for future generations were based.

22. Mr. BOUTS'KO (Ukraine) said that the independence and equality of rights of small States, together with the existence of appropriate security conditions for such States, must now constitute one of the principal norms of international coexistence. The international community could not fail to be concerned by any violation of that norm. Accordingly, his delegation viewed the introduction of the question at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly as justified and opportune.

23. In a world in which the climate of ideological confrontation and enmity belonged to the past, the wish of States to establish and broaden cooperative relations on a basis of collaboration and interaction was now prevailing. The way was being paved for the establishment of a new world order.

24. Nevertheless, the world was still not immune to further outbreaks of oppression, arbitrariness and international violence. Iraq's recent aggression against Kuwait confirmed the relevance of General Assembly resolution 44/51, which noted the particular vulnerability of small States to threats and interference in their internal affairs, and stressed the significance of the obligation of all States to respect the territorial integrity of other States and the other principles of the United Nations Charter.

25. His delegation was convinced that the time had come to consider the establishment, in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter, of effective machinery that would make it possible to react operationally whenever acts of aggression or instances of threats to international peace and security occurred, and that provided for the use of coercive measures and armed force. While the international community had made provision for the application of Article 99 of the Charter in appropriate instances, thus establishing powerful barriers to international adventurism and considerably strengthening the security of small States, his delegation was of the view that, in order to protect that security, United Nations peace-keeping operations should be conducted in a bolder manner. The form and nature of such operations should reflect the requirements of each specific case and should be conducted in accordance with Security Council decisions and the requests of small States in specific instances. In that connection he noted that the report of the Secretary-General contained a number of interesting conclusions and recommendations. His delegation agreed with the conclusions formulated by the Government of Finland on page 22 of the report. With regard to regional organizations, the conclusions and proposals put forward by the Bahamas on page 10 of the report merited special consideration. His delegation was among

(Mr. Bouts'ko, Ukraine)

those in favour of adopting draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3 by consensus. At the same time he was of the view that the question could more effectively be considered in the First Committee, which dealt with all other issues relating to international security.

26. Mr. AL-SABAH (Kuwait) said that recent events had demonstrated that the stability and security of small States were closely linked to international peace and security, the maintenance of which was one of the fundamental principles of the United Nations. The ability to counter any threat to the stability and security of small States was an important element in assessing the credibility of the United Nations and its discharge of the functions conferred upon it by the Charter. The best means of guaranteeing the security and stability of small States was for all States to respect the principles of the Charter, particularly those relating to the non-use of force in international relations, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

27. Experience had shown that the fears of small States regarding their stability and security were justified. In that connection it might prove useful to benefit from Kuwait's experience during the invasion, occupation and annexation of its territory by Iraq, acts which had been committed in flagrant violation of the letter and spirit of the Charter. Despite the positive developments which had occurred in the world, and the new world order based on the legitimacy and equality of States, those events showed that there were forces for evil which sought to translate their expansionist dreams into reality. The people of Kuwait would never forget the unyielding stance adopted by the international community, through the United Nations, in re-establishing peace and justice in Kuwait and restoring the country's legitimacy. His delegation felt duty-bound to express the gratitude of the Kuwaiti people to friendly States, and to all those who had risen up to restore justice and who had made sacrifices in defence of the principles that must govern relations between all States, large or small.

28. His delegation had listened to the statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Maldives with great interest, and trusted that draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3 would be adopted by consensus.

29. Mr. AL-KHATER (Qatar) drew attention to the serious events which had taken place in the world since the General Assembly had adopted resolution 44/51, events which had once more highlighted the need to protect the stability and security of small States. Kuwait had been the victim of a brutal attack aimed at destroying its identity as a sovereign State. The United Nations response to the aggression had been in keeping with its responsibilities relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. The measures taken had been effective and had brought an end to the aggression. Kuwait, a small State with limited military capacity, could not have fought off the Iraqi aggression on its own or dealt with the consequences of the invasion. His delegation therefore welcomed the report of the

(Mr. Al-Khater, Qatar)

Secretary-General contained in document A/46/339 and particularly endorsed paragraph 24 of the report.

30. Qatar wished to acknowledge the excellent conduct of the Security Council during the events in the Gulf and the positive results achieved. That that had been possible was due to the changes which had taken place in the international political arena, enabling two blocs of countries to reject confrontation and establish cooperative relations. It had also meant that the veto had not continued to be abused in the Security Council, with the result that the Council had rapidly adopted a number of resolutions on the situation engendered in Kuwait by the Iraqi invasion, thus facilitating the adoption of measures to ensure that the resolutions were duly implemented. The Gulf crisis had confirmed the effectiveness of the organs of the United Nations in resolving international conflicts, and the time had now come to consider the possibility of establishing additional means of guaranteeing the protection and security of small States.

31. His delegation welcomed the recommendations of the Workshop on the Protection and Security of Small States which had taken place in Maldives in May 1991. Among the recommendations which Qatar supported and hoped would be applied strictly in respect of all crises were: the implementation of the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter exclusively in cases of aggression and to enhance the effectiveness of the Security Council; the application of all Security Council resolutions; and support for measures taken by the Secretary-General in fulfilment of his mandate to monitor international security, especially in relation to small States. Qatar particularly supported the establishment of a United Nations force which could respond rapidly to new acts of aggression endangering the peace and security of small States. Such a force could be financed from funds released as a result of a reduction in military expenditure, in view of the relaxation that was taking place in international relations.

32. Mr. WAN Jingzhang (China) said that the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq a year earlier had shown that the world was by no means free of trouble, and that the security, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of small States were still vulnerable to violations resulting from external threats and interference.

33. China had always been of the view that the world was an integral whole and that the security of all States, small States in particular, was one of the interrelated components of the overall structure of international peace and security. Since hegemonism and power politics still existed, it was fully understandable that weak and small States should be very concerned about their own security. Moreover, such States were justified in hoping to draw more attention to their security and seek better protection from the international community. Only when all States, whether large or small, rich or poor, felt a sense of security would the planet enjoy genuine peace and stability.

(Mr. Wan Jingzhang, China)

34. The international community must make earnest efforts to ensure due conduct of relations among States, in strict observance of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and in conformity with the established norms governing international relations, so that a new international order would replace the old one that was based on hegemony and power politics. That was the essential way in which international peace and security could be maintained and the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of small States could be protected.

35. All States, regardless of their size, strength and wealth, were all independent and equal members of the international community and were entitled to choose which path to take, in the light of their own circumstances. No country, especially a large and powerful one, should seek to impose on others its own social system, values, ideology and mode of development. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States should be respected, and disputes between States should be settled by peaceful means through consultations and dialogue on an equal footing. Under no circumstances should a State resort to the use or threat of force, and still less should it infringe upon the sovereignty, annex the territory and interfere in the internal affairs of other States, on whatever pretext. All States, large and small alike, should treat one another as equals; they should seek common ground, while putting aside differences, and endeavour to achieve common development on such a basis. Large countries, including regional Powers, had special responsibilities and obligations in that connection. The United Nations and some regional organizations had made commendable contributions to the maintenance of regional and international security and the promotion of world peace. His delegation hoped that they would continue to do so, and was willing to join colleagues from other countries in those endeavours.

36. Mr. CAMILLERI (Malta) said that in addition to the problems of either internal or external origin faced by all States, whether large or small, small States with only limited resources for meeting such challenges faced special difficulties which arose from their size and were primarily, although not exclusively, related to security. The Secretary-General's report (A/46/339) drew attention, in paragraph 16, to the fact that small States were especially vulnerable to territorial incursions mounted not only by other States but also by mercenaries, or for that matter, by terrorists, including drug traffickers.

37. It was important not to ignore the fact that security was itself affected by other aspects of national and international life. As the Government of Maldives had indicated in paragraph 7 of its reply, as reproduced in the Secretary-General's report, while the protection of small States could be viewed from the narrow military point of view, it could also be viewed from a broader perspective that included economic and social factors. The chief means of remedying the vulnerability of small States lay in a stable and well-ordered international environment subject to the rule of law. For that reason, small States attached great importance to the role of the United Nations in maintaining peace. Moreover, they participated actively in

(Mr. Camilleri, Malta)

international deliberations on security and cooperation. Malta had played such a role in respect of a variety of issues, ranging from the law of the sea to the question of the elderly and the aged and, most recently, the question of climate change.

38. For small States, the United Nations Charter was the major, if not the only, available safeguard. In that context, his delegation attached particular importance to Article 99 of the Charter, which empowered the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion might threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

39. Furthermore, action at the regional level played an important role in the protection and security of small States. To that end, Malta had made its own contribution to confidence- and security-building in the Mediterranean, since it regarded those factors as an important component of the process of security-building at the global level.

40. As the Secretary-General himself had concluded, the international community had a vested interest in safeguarding the security of small States, since the international order could be undermined by their instability or loss of security. Draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3 responded to those considerations.

41. Mr. GUBB (New Zealand) said that the principles of collective security and the primacy of law in the conduct of international relations were fundamental to the security of small States. That was why New Zealand had sponsored a resolution on the matter when it had first been included on the Committee's agenda in 1989.

42. The equality of Member States, regardless of their respective size, wealth or military power, was a basic premise of the United Nations, as laid down in Article 2 of the Charter. His delegation therefore viewed with concern any suggestion which might alter that principle.

43. His country acknowledged that security was a multifaceted concept. In addition to the threat of military attack, there were other kinds of dangers such as the activities of drug traffickers or environmentally unsafe practices. That view was gaining wider acceptance and had prompted suggestions as to what sort of tasks could be entrusted to the Security Council. Perhaps the major factor in the vulnerability of small States was their own lack of economic development, which precluded economic diversification and long-term self-sufficiency. Those difficulties in turn affected their socio-economic well-being and political stability. The international community should therefore pay special attention to the needs of the small States and adopt more flexible criteria in the provision of assistance to them.

(Mr. Gubb, New Zealand)

44. Regional cooperation was an important factor in safeguarding the security of small States. The South Pacific Forum and associated organizations had played a valuable role in that respect for over 20 years. The members of those organizations had exchanged views on a variety of issues and concluded numerous treaties aimed at safeguarding the region.

45. Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland) took the Chair.

46. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Nepal) said that the United Nations was the sum of its parts and that there was an organic relationship between the parts and the whole, with each and every nation, whether large or small, having an equal role to play in evolving its principles, roles and procedures.

47. The usurpation or negation of the rights of small States had been the fundamental reason for chaos, disorder and war. In order to avoid the recurrence of such disasters, the United Nations, as a collective security system, had embodied the basic principles of international relations. Unfortunately, it had not been so successful in implementing those principles universally.

48. Because of the vulnerability of small States, the international community should accord special consideration to their needs, aspirations and concerns. The protection and security of small States was a very complex matter, involving a combination of politics, economics, military strength and, above all, political wisdom and good will.

49. The strengthening of democratic culture was a prerequisite for the orderly evolution of States. However, security could not be achieved without a minimum standard of living for mankind in general, since a low level of economic development could contribute to destabilization. In that connection, he drew attention to the situation in Haiti and to paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/46/L.8.

50. In an increasingly interdependent and indivisible world, the interests of small States should not be overlooked. With that in view, the international community must adhere fully to the United Nations Charter, implement consistently United Nations resolutions and extend the role of the United Nations Secretary-General within the framework of Article 99 of the Charter.

51. Back in 1960, his country's Prime Minister, when addressing the General Assembly, had indicated that the United Nations was composed of many small nations which could play a very positive role in the world, a message as relevant now as it had been then.

52. Mr. WAN JUNAIDI (Malaysia) said that unconditional respect by all States for the principles of the United Nations Charter was a guarantee of international security. The international community and the United Nations

(Mr. Wan Junaidi, Malaysia)

must remind States which failed to observe those principles that aggressive actions were unacceptable, as the international community had shown during the Gulf War.

53. However, small States could not rely solely on the observance of those principles and on the good faith of other States. For its part, the international community should not wait for aggression to occur before it moved to rectify the situation. It was imperative that the Secretary-General and the United Nations should give top priority to the establishment of a preventive diplomacy mechanism, as part of which the Secretary-General must enjoy the confidence and support of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

54. Regional organizations could play an important role in resolving conflicts. The Association of South East Asian Nations had been established in 1967 and had contributed to the stability and security of its member States and the region as a whole. All its members were parties to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia, to which Viet Nam had recently acceded, an example he hoped other countries in the region would follow.

55. Small States could play a very important role in ensuring their own security. The question of national security was a responsibility of the nation State itself and it was vital for small States to develop internal resilience in order to foster economic and social progress. International assistance would also enable them to develop their economies, which would in turn enhance their security.

56. Malaysia was a sponsor of the draft resolution on the protection and security of small States and, in particular, supported the proposal that the Secretary-General should continue to explore ways and means, within the United Nations and in accordance with the Charter, of preserving the security of such States. It also endorsed the call for international and regional organizations to provide assistance to small States for the strengthening of their security when so requested.

57. Mr. KHANI (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his country attached great importance to the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/339), in which his country's position on the application of the principles of the United Nations Charter was set out. He called on the United Nations to adopt effective measures to avert all threats to peace and security through the peaceful settlement of disputes, the fostering of friendly relations between countries, the promotion of measures to prevent external interference in the internal affairs of other countries and, in cases of aggression, the application of the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter. To guarantee the security of small States and to ensure international peace and security, respect for and strict compliance with the Charter was necessary. Effective measures were also needed to end aggression and the occupation of territories by force, practices which violated the principles of the Charter and the rules of international law, the foundations on which the United Nations was built.

58. Mr. BUGOTU (Solomon Islands) said that his delegation firmly supported draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3, since the Solomon Islanders knew and accepted that theirs was a small and vulnerable island State with a limited capacity to meet its own security needs. That was why Solomon Islands had no army but had deliberately chosen instead to establish a police force as a more effective instrument for maintaining and preserving the peace in a small country.

59. The United Nations should facilitate the implementation of the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter concerning action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. The Secretary-General should play a more active role in the spirit of Article 99 of the Charter, so as to respond positively to requests from small States that felt threatened by other States, by sending missions to assess situations and prevent them from worsening.

60. In that connection, he recalled that the Workshop on Protection and Security of Small States, held in Maldives in May 1991, had recommended that consideration should be given to the establishment of either a permanent or an ad hoc force that could be activated under Chapter VII of the Charter. The possibility had also been suggested that a rapid response force might be established under the direct control of the Secretary-General to be used to meet the security threats of small States at their request. The activation of such a force could be at the initiative of the Secretary-General in consultation with the Security Council.

61. Solomon Islands, which supported the proposal of the United States President, Mr. Bush, regarding the strengthening of the ability of the United Nations to provide electoral assistance to Member States upon request, wished to see a similar commitment given by the United Nations on the issue of the protection and security of small States, since it was likely that more countries would be seeking assistance for protection and security than for elections.

62. Finally, Solomon Islands hoped that bureaucratic procedures would not delay the adoption and implementation of the resolution.

63. Mr. ZVONKO (Belarus) said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/339) reflected a widely held view on the subject, namely, that consideration of the question of the vulnerability of small States to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs was timely and fitting. The aggression against Kuwait had underscored the need for solidarity among Member States in adopting more effective measures to curb aggressors and prevent similar acts in the future in order to protect States against violations of the norms and principles of international law.

64. In its international activities and in its relations with its neighbours, Belarus complied with the provisions of the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States

(Mr. Zvonko, Belarus)

in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and promoted its implementation at the international level.

65. Belarus was at a stage of formation and development as a State. On 25 August 1991, by decision of the supreme legislative body of the Republic, a resolution had been adopted on the Declaration on State Sovereignty, which had acquired constitutional authority. The Supreme Soviet had further declared political and economic independence and, on 19 September, it had decided to change the name of the country to the Republic of Belarus. On 7 October, the Supreme Soviet had adopted the Declaration on Principles of Foreign Policy, in which it reaffirmed its adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and to other international legal instruments. Belarus trusted that it would receive international support at the present stage of its formation to enable it to promote mutual cooperation in all fields with interested States.

66. Belarus believed that the protection and security of small States was an important part of the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security. In order to strengthen measures in that area, the principles of the Charter should be strictly observed and a global approach should be adopted in establishing a practical system of collective security. Recent world events had opened up the possibility of a new role for the United Nations and of laying the foundations for a system of international security which would protect the rights and interests of all members of the world community.

67. In order to prevent any kind of aggression against small States, the role of the United Nations should be strengthened in key areas of security through the implementation of new measures adapted to the contemporary situation. Belarus believed that it would be useful to expand the scope of the Security Council's activities and to strengthen the coordinating role of the Secretary-General, as well as to intensify mediation activities and preventive diplomacy. The United Nations should be able to obtain and analyse information about dangerous situations and exchange such information with appropriate international bodies. Other measures could include the dispatch of observer missions or personal representatives of the Secretary-General to areas of tension, and the use of the Secretary-General's good offices at the request of States. The implementation of such measures, together with bilateral, regional and global cooperation, would ensure peaceful and stable relations between States and thereby guarantee the protection and security of small States.

68. Finally, Belarus hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus, since it reflected its own point of view.

69. Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka) said that small States found it impossible to defend themselves alone when confronted by bigger and stronger States or by mercenaries, terrorists or drug traffickers. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq was only the most recent example of the plight of a small State whose sovereignty and territorial integrity were violated. Small States struggling

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

to develop economically were unable to build and maintain armed forces to defend themselves against external aggression. In Sri Lanka, for example, the armed forces had until recently played only a ceremonial role. The civil strife in the country had changed that situation; the Government had been constrained to mobilize the armed forces to meet the assault by terrorists, which threatened to destroy the country's society and reduce economic growth in the country. The security forces had succeeded in restoring law and order in many parts of the country and he was confident that law and order would soon be restored in the remaining areas. The mobilization of the armed forces had compelled the Government to increase funding for defence which, in 1992, would amount to SL Rs 15.3 billion - almost 9.8 per cent of the country's total budget of SL Rs 156.6 billion. That represented an increase of 31 per cent over the 1991 expenditure on defence. In the event of foreign aggression, however, no amount of spending would provide Sri Lanka with the military capacity to ward off the aggression. The country's security therefore depended on the adherence by all Member States to the principles of the Charter.

70. In the final analysis, small States needed the United Nations, since it was in that forum that international opinion could be mobilized when a bigger and more powerful State interfered in the domestic affairs of a small State.

71. There was still no clear-cut definition of the concept of "a small State". If a population of under 2 million were used as the criterion, some 50 States Members of the United Nations could be classified as small States; if the population criterion were raised to 5 million, the number of such States would be larger. Apart from considerations of population and size, however, it might also be argued that small States were those which had a small defence capacity and which were unable to mobilize adequate resources to meet acts of aggression or threats to their security and were therefore dependent for their security on appropriate external arrangements.

72. The specific manner in which the United Nations should respond to the need for special measures for the protection and security of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of small States deserved careful consideration. In that regard, his delegation invited the Secretary-General to explore further ways and means of preserving the security of small States and suggested that consultations with the members of the Security Council and other interested Governments should be continued.

73. Unconditional respect for the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and strict adherence to international law were essential. An environment of support and protection for small States should be created and appropriate mechanisms should be devised. That should be easier to achieve in view of the improved climate in international relations and the emerging spirit of cooperation.

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

74. In conclusion, Sri Lanka wholeheartedly supported draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3, of which it was a sponsor.

75. Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand) resumed the Chair.

76. Mr. PATOKALLIO (Finland) said that Finland's views on the question before the Committee were explained in greater detail in the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/339). All States were entitled to their security and only a few of them were in a position to provide it unilaterally. Small States, in particular, needed collective arrangements to safeguard their position in the international community. In a sense, international law per se was such a collective arrangement. Indeed, the best way of guaranteeing the security of all States was by strict adherence to the rules and principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. However, no State could afford to rely solely on the observance of international law by all States, but must provide for its own defence, unilaterally or multilaterally.

77. International measures were also needed for cases of non-observance of international law. Such measures must correspond to the rules of international law relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the United Nations imposed an obligation on Member States not only to maintain peace but also to enforce it. It was therefore important to implement a broad spectrum of peace-keeping activities, from preventive diplomacy to peace enforcement.

78. The response of the Security Council to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq had demonstrated the Council's determination to take action, under Chapter VII of the Charter, to protect the security - indeed the very existence - of a small State.

79. The United Nations must be in a position to provide Member States with effective means of settling their disputes peacefully and to respond effectively to acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace. The security of small States would be the first to benefit therefrom.

80. Mr. PAULSEN (Chile) said that the protection and security of small States was not an abstract issue but one which arose from the experience of Member States, among them the Republic of Maldives, which had been the victim of an armed assault launched by mercenaries in an attempt to overthrow its democratically elected Government. It was the first time that a Member State had brought a case of that nature before the United Nations and the support of the 37 sponsors of the draft resolution testified to the importance of the issue, which had brought to the fore, first, its direct relationship to the concept of international peace and security, a principle which was established in the Charter of the United Nations and was fundamental to the survival and independence of small States; second, the recognition of the vulnerability of small States; and, third, the lack of adequate international machinery to protect the States involved.

(Mr. Paulsen, Chile)

81. With respect to the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/339), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/51, his delegation deemed appropriate the procedures which had been followed in dealing with the issue; moreover, it felt that the consultations with Member States had been very valuable and that criteria and trends relevant to the situation in question could be identified from the replies. While conceptually clear, the matter was difficult to define; it would not be easy to establish universally acceptable ways and means of providing effective protection for the security of small States or to determine which States fell within that category.

82. His delegation viewed with particular interest the measures discussed in the Secretary-General's report with regard to the strengthening of the preventive capabilities of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole so that those capabilities could be used for preventive diplomacy. Also valuable were the comments of the Secretary-General regarding the role which could be played by regional organizations in setting up a reliable system of conflict prevention around small States. In that regard, such organizations could benefit from the experience and support of the United Nations and its machinery for maintaining and establishing peace.

83. Among the replies from Governments reproduced in the Secretary-General's report, his delegation agreed with the Soviet Union's proposal regarding the setting up within the Security Council of a group of experts on steps to be taken in emergency situations, such as the mass taking of hostages, terrorism and actions by mercenaries. It had also found the approach involving the development of a stable model for the security of small States interesting, specifically the recommendation that that model should take into account such aspects as the just settlement of economic and ecological questions, ensuring the safety of individuals and observance of human rights.

84. His Government had taken note of the draft resolution introduced by the Republic of Maldives and sponsored by a large number of countries and his delegation would gladly join in a consensus on that text.

85. Mr. YOSSIFOV (Bulgaria) said that, at a time when new avenues of cooperation were opening up, new security concerns had emerged which underlined the vulnerability of small States. Having left behind the old concepts of security based on a balance between the military alliances of the past, the contemporary world was discovering a renewed faith in a collective multilateral approach to the problems of peace and security. In such circumstances, it was logical and justifiable that small States should seek greater stability in international affairs through the efforts of the international community, so that they could keep their modest resources for their own development. The United Nations was destined to play a key role in that regard.

(Mr. Yossifov, Bulgaria)

86. His country had welcomed the adoption without a vote of General Assembly resolution 44/51. It greatly appreciated the work carried out by the Secretary-General pursuant to articles 5 and 6 of that resolution and welcomed his report on the issue. His delegation believed that the establishment and maintenance of a stable international climate of support and protection was essential for the safeguarding of the security of small States. In that connection, strong hopes had been placed in the creation of a new democratic world order, based on freedom of choice, respect for national sovereignty and the rule of law. The unconditional observance by all States of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations would undoubtedly provide the core of a modern system of global security.

87. The Gulf crisis had demonstrated the potential of the collective security provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular Chapter VII. The effective implementation of those provisions had turned out to be vital not only to safeguard the security of the States Members of the Organization but also to protect their very existence, in particular that of the small States. While the activation of that potential in the current highly interdependent world was welcomed by his delegation, it raised certain new issues which must be duly addressed by the international community if the collective security mechanism established under the Charter was to function in an appropriate and effective manner.

88. It was important to strengthen the preventive diplomacy capabilities of the various components of the United Nations system so that situations which might jeopardize international stability could be localized and contained as they arose. In that connection, Bulgaria fully supported the idea of activating the potential of the preventive diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General pursuant to Article 99 of the Charter. The creation and operation of an early warning system within the existing United Nations structures could be vital to the Organization's ability to monitor potential conflict situations and undertake effective preventive measures. The peacemaking and peace-keeping functions of the United Nations should be strengthened. It was encouraging that efforts in that direction were already being made by the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, the Special Committee on Peace-Keeping Operations and other United Nations bodies. In that connection, he wished to mention the draft Declaration on Fact-finding by the United Nations in the Field of the Maintenance of International Peace and Security, the adoption of which by the General Assembly would be an important step forward in that field.

89. The protection and security of small States was closely linked to the issue of the harmonization of mechanisms at the regional and global levels, as some recent events had demonstrated. With respect to the draft resolution before the Committee, his delegation had decided to join those countries which had called for its adoption by consensus. It would be appropriate for the United Nations to consider sponsoring a study, to be conducted by a small

(Mr. Yossifov, Bulgaria)

group of experts, on the many aspects of the security of smaller States, or to consider holding an international seminar on that issue.

90. Mr. PURSOO (Grenada) said that every State, large or small, needed among other things security within its borders as a prerequisite to economic development and the betterment of the quality of life of its citizens. However, the threat of external interference was a constant reminder to small States of their fragility and vulnerability, forcing them to divert excessive funds to security measures when they were needed for more productive purposes. Those threats could be diverse and complex, and their motives multiple and unsuspected. The menace that drug traffickers presented to societies throughout the world was beyond question, but the danger to small States was a cause of particular concern and called for concerted international arrangements and mechanisms in response. The difficulty of securing the coastlines of small island States was obvious. It was almost impossible to provide effective protection for the coasts of archipelagic States such as the Bahamas in the Caribbean and Maldives in the Indian Ocean. The drug traffickers and terrorists were often better equipped and armed than the authorities. The need to fight those evils could sap the means and vitality of small States seeking to promote participatory, open and stable democratic institutions, and thereby retard political, cultural and psychological advancement in those societies.

91. The events of 2 August 1990 when Iraq had invaded and annexed Kuwait were a tragic reminder of the vulnerability of small States. The situation today in Haiti, too, was a clear example of the pain and suffering that could follow the subversion of a legitimate Government. The United Nations had the opportunity to avert the recurrence of such acts.

92. Draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3 had been introduced by the Republic of Maldives, a small State whose own territorial integrity had been threatened in 1988. It was backed by numerous States, large and small, because it was a reasonable and just draft. It recognized the need for assistance to small States, which should be provided in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The draft resolution also stressed the importance of self-help, and in that context encouraged the strengthening of regional security arrangements, increased interaction, cooperation and consultation.

93. Small States saw increased diplomacy as an effective security measure. It was in that light that his delegation had become a sponsor of the draft resolution on the protection and security of small States and urged its unanimous acceptance.

94. Mr. ABDUL LATIF (Brunei Darussalam) said that, with the changing international political climate, small States would look to the United Nations to guarantee their security. It was the responsibility of all Member States to respect unconditionally all the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Brunei Darussalam considered that all conflicts should be resolved

(Mr. Abdul Latif, Brunei Darussalam)

through diplomatic and peaceful means, and that the role of the Secretary-General as mediator in settling such conflicts was vital.

95. Despite pledges by Member States to adhere to the United Nations Charter, violations had been committed - and it was the small States that were particularly vulnerable. Member States should endeavour to implement all the relevant resolutions of the United Nations consistently and without exception. The concerns of Member States in that area deserved further consideration. His country was a sponsor of the draft resolution on the protection and security of small States and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

96. Mr. SIDOROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that at the forty-fourth session, the Soviet Union had supported the inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly, at the request of Maldives, of the item entitled "Protection and security of small States". It was an important issue, as would be seen from the comments in document A/46/339, the consultations with the Secretary-General and the replies received from Member States. The report showed the vulnerability of small States, which called for special attention and the support of the international community.

97. The problem of protecting small States called for an approach which took account of its manifold aspects. The Security Council and the United Nations in general must help to avert conflicts by identifying "hot spots", establishing an early warning system and setting up a multinational centre on the dangers of war. To that end, account must be taken of the experience acquired within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It would be useful, too, to send observer missions to places of possible conflict and to use the latest technological means. That approach must also take into account the settlement of economic and ecological questions and the observance of human rights.

98. The course of events in a number of regions of the world had demonstrated the consequences of an arms trade without international control. Small States were particularly vulnerable to that situation, as also to illegal drug trafficking, kidnapping, mercenary activities and terrorism. In accordance with the provisions of the Charter, the Secretary-General had the right to promote the maintenance of international peace, which included the protection of small States.

99. The Soviet Union was ready to participate in a dialogue on those questions, and would therefore support draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3.

100. Mr. MAVROMMATIS (Cyprus) said that the vulnerability of small States had been severely tested in the recent crisis and war in the Gulf. The joint position taken by the international community and its willingness to fight for the restoration of the territorial integrity and security of a small State emphasized the need to establish machinery capable of guaranteeing the

(Mr. Mavrommatis, Cyprus)

protection and security of small States. From the outset, Cyprus had supported the initiative of Maldives, not only because of the obvious need to protect small States from aggressive and powerful neighbours, but also because it was a living proof of the urgent need to devise ways and means, in accordance with the Charter, to preserve the security of small States.

101. Those States were particularly vulnerable to external threats, interference in their internal affairs and blatant aggression, as demonstrated by the case of his own country. It was vital, therefore, to protect them and preserve their security by enhancing and strengthening existing mechanisms, in the interests not only of small States, but of international peace and security.

102. In connection with the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/339), recent events had indicated clearly that there was still a long way to go before the achievement of a new world order establishing conditions of peace, security and mutual respect among States, without selective application of principles and resolutions.

103. Cyprus trusted that the Security Council and interested Governments would cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the preparation of a report to the forty-ninth session which would help to create the conditions for establishing a real universal peace.

104. Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu) said that the vulnerability of small States to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs jeopardized the rule of law. Those who tried to take advantage of that vulnerability were a danger to the maintenance of international peace and security. If smaller States could be threatened, intimidated or absorbed by larger, more powerful neighbours, the entire system of international relations would be at risk.

105. The invasion of Kuwait in 1990 had represented a threat not only to that country and to the region, but also to small countries in other regions which were even more vulnerable than Kuwait had been. The value of Kuwait's liberation as a legal and moral precedent would be determined by the future actions of the international community. If the principles and practices of the United Nations were not respected, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of small States could be similarly threatened in other instances. Not all small States were able to obtain the support Kuwait had obtained, and no small State wished to be dependent on collective military action. Such a solution was very costly, both for the international community and for the small States. Accordingly, positive preventive measures to assure the security of small States were needed, rather than corrective measures applied after the event.

106. Drug traffickers and terrorists were major threats to small, developing countries. Such individuals respected no law, morality or code of conduct,

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

not even their own. International public opinion was meaningless to them, and the only language they understood was that of strong, concerted action to counter their nefarious deeds and prevent them from destroying the political and social infrastructure of small States. Regional cooperation between large and small States was essential in order to combat them.

107. Even as he spoke, thugs in uniform, unworthy even of being referred to as soldiers, were terrorizing the population of a small country in the Caribbean. The United Nations had expressed its clear and firm support for the people of Haiti, and had refused to legitimize the usurpation of their democracy. Small countries throughout the world were carefully watching events in Haiti, which would enable them to judge the firmness of the international community's commitment to assure justice and equality for all. The rule of law was a wonderful concept, in international relations in particular. Vanuatu therefore hoped that a broad international consensus would be achieved which recognized and supported the sovereign equality of all States.

108. Mrs. MAUALA (Samoa) said that neither isolation nor economic security was sufficient to protect a small State against external threats, as had been clearly demonstrated by events in Maldives in 1988 and more recently in the Gulf. The relaxation of world tensions had improved the international climate to the point that a response at the world level to the bullying of a small State by a larger neighbour had become a possibility and, as in the Gulf crisis, a reality.

109. The Secretary-General's report (A/46/339) acknowledged that the international community had an interest in safeguarding the security of small States. The response and performance of the United Nations in the Gulf crisis had shown that, given the will, the machinery for coming to the rescue of a small State could function effectively. However, in addition to the need for a system of collective security, there was also a need to exercise preventive diplomacy and to take advantage of the present international atmosphere to put in place measures enabling the United Nations to monitor potentially dangerous situations before they developed into conflagrations.

110. Of prime importance, though, was the need for unconditional respect by all nations for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. If those principles were applied, the threat to the security of small States, and all other States, would be significantly reduced.

111. Samoa fully supported the draft resolution and hoped to see its adoption by consensus.

112. Mr. HUQ (Bangladesh) said that as the turn of the century approached, profound changes had taken place in international relations. For example, the world had seen how Kuwait, a small country, had become the victim of Iraqi aggression and how the collective action of the United Nations had restored its independence and sovereignty.

113. The issue of the protection and security of small States required the collective attention of the international community. In that regard, the United Nations had a leading role to play in promoting and protecting the interests of small States, which were particularly vulnerable to external threats and acts of interference in their internal affairs.

114. While the international community had a major role to play in assuring the protection and security of small States, there was perhaps a need for the United Nations to take the lead in creating the protective environment which a small State needed so much, primarily by building upon the arrangement which already existed under the international collective security system envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations.

115. Bangladesh, one of the sponsors of resolution 44/51, was also a sponsor of draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3, and hoped that the Committee would adopt it unanimously.

116. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should consider draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3.

117. It was so decided.

118. Mr. WIDE (Sweden) said, in explanation of Sweden's position with regard to the draft resolution under consideration, that his country would be joining the consensus, in the firm belief that collective security in large measure depended on collective support for the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in safeguarding international peace and security.

119. In full accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, Sweden was actively involved in efforts to establish a European security order within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe which would, for the foreseeable future, have as its main function to help prevent conflicts before they reached military dimensions, and to promote consultation and cooperation.

120. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should take action on draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

121. Draft resolution A/SPC/46/L.3 was adopted by consensus.

122. Mr. ZAKI (Maldives), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, thanked the Committee and its secretariat for the excellent support provided in a variety of ways. The sponsorship of the draft resolution by more than one third of the Member States was testimony to the increasing importance being attached by the international community to such a fundamental issue. The text just adopted should be viewed not as a resolution by small States for small States, but as one which addressed major questions with a direct bearing on international peace and security. Given the overwhelming support for the draft resolution shown by Member States, his delegation was confident that the resolution would be more than just a symbolic gesture, and that Member States would continue to give their serious consideration to the issue.

123. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 69. The Committee would in due course submit its report on the question to the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.